

In 1995 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a program to remove the mining waste from residential property and the mine fields in the Jasper County area. The Joplin City Council concluded that it would be desirable for a community group to serve as advisors and monitors of the clean-up program. The Council established the Jasper County EPA Superfund Citizens' Task Force by Resolution NO. 95-088 on March 6, 1995. The Task Force was initially composed of representatives from banking, real estate, chambers of commerce, attorneys, Joplin Council, Webb City, schools, Joplin Planning and Zoning Commission, Jasper County, community volunteers, etc. Earl Carr, who was a Joplin Councilman, was designated as chair and Bob Nichols as vice-chair. Mr. Carr later became Joplin Mayor, and continued as chair of the Task Force. A couple of years later the Task Force realized that Newton County had mine waste also. Therefore, the Joplin City Council adopted Resolution NO. 97-088 on December 15, 1997, expanding the boundaries to include Newton County and renaming the group the Environmental Task Force of Jasper and Newton Counties. The membership of the Task Force was enlarged to include representatives from Newton County. Mr. Carr continued as chair until his death. At that time Bob Nichols was designated as chair.

In 2003, representatives of the Task Force, City of Joplin and the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce met to discuss the future of the Environmental Task Force of Jasper and Newton Counties. It was concluded that the scope of the Task Force was much broader than the City of Joplin and it should be separated from the City. This resulted in the Task Force being incorporated on August 26, 2004, as a 501(c)3 charitable corporation with Jasper and Newton Counties being the incorporators.

The Task Force is governed by a Board of Directors – 8 from Jasper County and 6 from Newton County. The board members are appointed by the respective county commissions. The directors are appointed for 4-year terms. The directors elect the officers. There are no requirements specified in the By-laws for individuals serving as directors. Normally, however, the person appointed either lives or works in the County he represents. A list of the current directors can be found on this website.